



RAVENNA, OHIO.

WEDNESDAY, Dec. 27, 1854.

Democratic Convention.

The Democrats of Portage County, will meet in convention by Delegates, at the Court House, in Ravenna, on SATURDAY THE 30TH DAY OF DECEMBER, INST., to choose four Delegates to attend the State Convention, to be held at the City of Columbus, on the 8th day of January next. Each township will be entitled to two Delegates in said County convention.

By order of Cent. Ex. Com.
J. G. WILLIS, Chairman.

A Homestead Bill.

Mr. Dawson has introduced his original Homestead bill in Congress, in the place of that passed by the Senate at the close of its last session. The bill, in substance, gives every man one hundred and sixty acres of land, who will settle upon, and cultivate the same.

Here a reward is held out to industry. The great West by the operation of such a law, would soon become settled with a race of hardy, free, and independent citizens, owning the soil where they dwell, and attached to it by all the sacred associations of home and country. A measure so full of beneficent results, so productive of industry and happiness, deserves the unequalled support of every member of Congress.

The great wealth of a nation lies in the number of its well cultivated farms, and well regulated workshops. And every measure adopted by the national or State legislature, tending to secure the cultivation of the soil, and an increase in the number of homesteads, may be safely regarded as one of extensive public benefit. The bold pioneers of the West, who expose their lives and fortunes to the dangers and accidents ever attendant upon the early settlement of a country, deserve encouragement at the hands of the government. They are the true heroes of the present age. It has been said that "the man who causes a blade of grass to grow where none ever grew before, is a public benefactor." How highly then, must we regard that public benefactor by the operation of which, our whole western territory, large enough for an independent empire, shall be transformed from a trackless wilderness, to a beautiful and blooming garden!

The bill requiring as it does, the owner to reside upon, and till the land he holds, will secure its settlement by none but the industrious and deserving. It offers no inducement to the indolent and speculative. Its reward is to the man of merit. The country is full of young men whose only capital to begin life with, is a strong arm and a stout heart. To such, the bill offers what is dearer than all else—a home, where they, and the ones they love, may dwell in the enjoyment of all the abundant blessings which "mother earth" ever yields to the hand of honest toil.

Every acre of wild land in the west brought under judicious cultivation, adds to the wealth and security of our government, and the prosperity of our people.

A Valuable Btic.

One of the editors of the *Statesman and Democrat*, while in the Patent Office, at Washington, the other day, found the letter of Andrew Jackson, declining to have his body entombed in the sarcophagus of the Roman Emperor. From it he makes the following extract:

"I have read the proceedings of the presentation, by you, of the sarcophagus, and the resolutions passed by the board of Directors, so honorable to my fame, with sensations and feeling more easily to be conjectured than by me expressed. The whole proceedings call for my most grateful thanks, which are hereby tendered you, and through you to the President and Directors of the National Institute. But with the warmest sentiments that can inspire a grateful heart, I must decline accepting the honor intended to be bestowed. I CANNOT CONSENT THAT MY MORTAL BODY SHALL BE LAID IN A REPOSITORY PREPARED FOR AN EMPEROR OR A KING. MY REPUBLICAN FEELINGS AND PRINCIPLES FORBID IT; the simplicity of our system of government forbids it. Every monument erected to perpetuate the memory of our heroes and statesmen, ought to bear evidence of the economy and simplicity of our republican institutions, and the plainness of our republican citizens, who are the sovereigns of our glorious Union, and whose virtue is to perpetuate it. TRUE VIRTUE CANNOT EXIST WHERE POMP AND PARADE ARE THE GOVERNING PASSIONS. It can only dwell with the people—the great laboring and producing classes—that form the bone and sinew of our Confederacy."

Those are the sentiments of a true Republican, as he was, and they should be frequently adverted to, inasmuch as a tail-made influence attaches to his name. Did the stern simplicity prevail throughout our country that those sentiments inculcate, the complaint would not now be so universal that "times are hard."—*Ex.*

Foreign News.

The only news from the seat of war in Europe of any interest, is, that Austria has signed an Alliance with France and England. This dashes to the ground, all prospect of a declaration on the part of the allies, of the independence of Hungary and Poland. It is now, the old war of tyrants and all the good that can grow out of it to the cause of freedom, must be merely accidental. So far as the advancement of republican principles on the continent is concerned, it is immaterial which party is victorious, for both are in favor of monarchy.

The siege of Sebastopol progresses but slowly, and it would not be surprising if many months should go by before any thing decisive is done. Every day is weakening the English and French armies, and exhausting the money in their treasuries.

The County Convention.

We hope our friends will bear in mind, the County Convention next Saturday.—A full attendance is highly desirable. We would respectfully suggest that the Democrats of the several townships, meet on Friday evening, the 29th inst., and appoint delegates to attend the Convention.

Our thanks are due to Hon. GEORGE BLISS, our Representative from this district, for Congressional favors.

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1855.—The Convention at Columbus on the 8th of January next, will be the opening of the political campaign for 1855. It is time for the Democracy throughout the State, to begin the work in good earnest. Organization, unity, and harmony of action, are needed to secure success, and with these, our principles and measures are sure to triumph over all opposition.

Congress.

This body will probably not accomplish much until after the holidays. One of the principal topics of discussion for several days past, has been a bill to establish a Board of Commissioners or Court of Claims, possessing the powers and privileges of a Court of Record, whose duty will be to adjudicate and settle all claims for services, damages, or otherwise, accruing to citizens of the United States against the General Government. This is a measure of considerable importance. At present, nearly all questions of this kind are passed upon solely by Congress or some of the departments of State, and the result oftentimes is, that unjust claims are allowed, while just ones are rejected. Were a Court of competent jurisdiction established where a fair and impartial trial could be had by the parties interested, it would contribute much to the right establishment of justice and equity in this department of our governmental affairs.

The patent laws are now under the consideration of the Committee on Patents, and some modification of these will probably be made.

Member of the Board of Public Works.

The Stark County Democrat, ever true as the needle to the pole, is already bucking on its armor for another contest, and is out with the name of J. J. HOFFMAN Esq., of Massillon, as candidate for Member of the Board of Public Works.

We second the motion Bro. Mc., and you may rest assured that "old Portage" will be found on the right side, not only at the coming Convention, but during the whole campaign.

Banks—Rag Money.

"Which has the scheme of paper money, and means—being interpreted—Bless, keep your word, give us the money, and we will plant white skies as sunny flowers, which in winter served instead." (SHALL.)

Did you ever think that banks were a great public necessity—that without them the whole business of the country would be thrown into inextricable confusion—that labor would toil unpaid, and grain, meat, wool, and all the many essentials to the support of life would rot, or perish in some other way on the producer's hands, if it were not for the great modern discovery that a "promise to pay" is quite as good as the pay—no matter if there is no prospect of the "promise" ever being performed.

Banking is a science, the real basis of which, is an accurate knowledge of the properties of figures—and the gullibility of the people. With the bankers rests the power to say what the value of any commodity is for the time being, that is, by making his "accommodations" "short" or "long;" he has the power to fix the value for the day on wheat, or corn, or pork, or fence-rails, or any other thing you make that can be valued by any money value. The banker can do another thing; he can keep your credit good or he can destroy it; he can give you a loan at 90 days that will enable you to commence, it may be, a very useful, necessary and profitable business, and just at the end of the 90 days, just as you are fairly under way, and before you can get returns from your business, can find himself "short;" and by so doing bring you up "shorter" and wind you up quicker than lightning ever scathed a tree.

Whither Tending.

Whether "Know Nothingism," so called, is to rule as a National party or not, one thing may be counted upon with absolute certainty, and that is this: The movement has evoked elements, which will control and mould all party combinations in the future. This is inevitable. The dogged pertinacity of the Era, the partisan *furor* of the Tribune, the corrupt appliances of the Administration, can neither of them avail to save their respective party organizations intact. The FREE SOIL PARTY HAS FULFILLED ITS MISSION, the Whig party the same, and the old Democratic party is, at last, overwhelmed and prostrated, by its utter and entire abandonment of the true principles of genuine Democracy.—*Portage Democrat.*

The above extract is from a lengthy editorial in the *Democrat* of Dec. 20th, and we quote it, that our readers may have an opportunity to judge of the position of that paper, in reference to the Free Soil party. Is it not a little strange that the warm advocate and champion of Free Soilism in Portage County, should so soon abandon his party, and seek to form a coalition with a pro-slavery organization? Will the Free Soilers of this county allow themselves to be bought and sold like chattels in the market?

A TRACE OF THE CITY OF GLASGOW.—A recent number of the Belfast (Ireland) Northern Whig, contains the following, which is probably one of the few traces that will ever be found of the lost steamship City of Glasgow:

"Wreck of the City of Glasgow.—A correspondent of the Mail, at Campbellton, states that on Saturday last, while a head-gear was walking along the shore at Balloch-gair, he picked a portion of the bow of a vessel which bears every mark of having belonged to the ill-fated steamer. It has on it, in large gilded characters, not much defaced, City of Glasgow, and in the corner, Let Glasgow flourish! This memento, which is probably all that will be seen of the noble vessel, was taken at the office of Mr. Watson, from whence it was forwarded to the builders, Messrs. Todd & McGregor, of Glasgow, for identification."

The Order—Signs—Let us know the World.

The other day says the *Leader*, we quoted a strong pro-slavery declaration of principles from the American organs at Washington. We were answered "dispute without authority." We wished so to believe, and therefore refrained from further comment. But now what have we, or rather what hear we from mid-Ohio! The Columbus *Reveille*—the American organ in that quarter—endorses the Washington *Journal*, and pushes its doctrines to a pro-slavery extreme. Hear it:

The American Organ, at Washington, a paper devoted to the advancement of the great American movement, which is now spreading all over the country, and leaving in its track a more beautiful political system than has been since the days of Washington. Jefferson and their contemporaries, in speaking of the defeat of Mr. Seward to the United States Senate, says that "the party seeks to defeat the re-election of Seward to the Senate, we are proud to admit, and, if need be, to defend. Nothing would give us more pleasure than to record the defeat of this arch agitator. Are we asked for a reason? Because we desire the perpetuity of the Union, and the recognition of the right of each and every State, as guaranteed by the Constitution. But it is false that we advocate slavery by opposing Seward. We never have discussed the merits or demerits of slavery in our columns. We would exclude, if we could, such men as Seward from the halls of Congress, to prevent the agitation of the question of slavery, and the ultimate disunion of the bonds of our national Union. This is *right and politic*. Had it not been for such men as Seward, Giddens, Chase, & Co., constantly agitating the question of slavery, both in and out of Congress, the country would have been better off—the Union more firmly united—our prospects brighter for the future—and the men of the North and the South could proudly look upon each other without distrust and jealousy, and hail each other as brothers of this mighty republic—who know no North, no South, no East, no West, but all as one, as one family of the United States, and as one people, united by the Supreme Judge of the universe, chosen to consult him alone, and disregard the opinions of men, merely relating to things not of this world! It would insult your good sense to tamely answer these inquiries in the negative, for you had anticipated them all. There has been only one answer conclusive to every reasonable worshiper of God. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." This is the only way in which we can provide for the political agreement of multifarious religious sentiment, has guaranteed to every man a right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience. And, for the first time in the history of modern civilization, our national government has not only permitted, but has encouraged, by her liberal legislation, the growth of every sincerely devoted body of Christians, irrespective of the name or formulae it is with regret that I see an attempt made in various portions of the country to create midnight censorship and star chambers, for the avowed object of disfranchising the Catholic population of the country, and waging a warfare of all others the most fearfully vindictive—a warfare against religion. In the whole history of the world there never has been a time when such secret organizations as the Know Nothings were left with so shallow a pretence for their combination as at the present; never a time when so little has been threatened by an organized form of Christianity as now.

In the first place, there is not a majority in the United States in communion with any church. There is a very clear majority who are not members of any religious body, and this majority would resist to the death the least suggestion of an encroachment upon their right of opinion. In the second place, the government does not, directly or indirectly, support by gifts or fees, any one denomination of Christians, and of course can have no preference in her choice among them. Moreover, the numerical strength of the communicants of the several denominations is very nearly the same, and kept in awe by mutual watchfulness. A mutual forbearance, continued since the organization of our government, has created a civil fraternity of feelings among conflicting opinions unknown before in the history of Christianity.

The population of the United States was in 1850, 23,191,918, and is now about 26,000,000. Of this number about 1,600,000 are Methodists of every order, 1,200,000 are Catholics.

Who, then, that is not afflicted with a superstitious monomania, can offer a reasonable pretence for a forbidden organization of religious power in the United States? In deed, sir, if there ever has been a time when infidelity and contempt for all religion had an ascendancy, that time is now.

But, should a time ever come when religious intolerance threatens the existence of free institutions, and resistance to ecclesiastical power becomes necessary, even then Know Nothingism, or any other secret political organization, ought not to receive the countenance of any lover of free government. Secrecy and hypocrisy are the favorite instruments of kings and despots.

No country can long remain free after its great principles are abandoned, and the government itself becomes the spoils of the trickery, evoking politician. I conceive the Know Nothing organization is of this character, or why the organization at all in a country like ours, where every man has a voice in the legislation of the land! Where no privileged order is established or countenance by law, where every man is free to think and say what he pleases, and where every other man in the country. If their designs are just and patriotic, they are surely sustained by reason; and I think the same reason which has convinced them will also convince us of the same things, and there can be no necessity for secrecy in the prosecution of honorable purposes.

But there are evils resulting from such associations which ought not to be overlooked. In a republican government the basis of all power must be the confidence of the people. What ever strikes public confidence, strikes at republicanism. When the Whig party bends the Democratic party upon an issue made public, the defeated party gives up the contest as honorably settled. In turn he openly gains for his own party an equal triumph, and the opposition is quietly acquiescent in their overthrow. It was done openly; they saw how it was done, and were satisfied.

But in the process of secret political societies public confidence is undermined; it gives way; a reign of terror commences; another secret organization of Know Nothings are organized; and they, too, may triumph, and the dismayed Know Nothings may not so tamely submit. They, in revenge, apply the munitions of secret warfare. Long before the charter was granted to any of these organizations, midnight was deemed a suspicious time for secret confessions, and a similar mode of proceeding was the park of fire, or the simpler modern invention called lacer matches, would be needed to assist in secret resistance to the superior trick of the victorious party.

No less sacred a citadel than the temple of worship and family altar will be lighted up, and illumine the earth with their fires. Aye, sir, already has this infernal work begun on the part of the Know Nothings, and the Catholic churches have been burned to the ground or battered down by the hands of the lawless, irresponsible mob, patronized by those graceless demagogues, who would reform the world and maintain the super-excellent character of Christian gentlemen, whilst they use for most enormous crimes, missions heated by mad fanaticism, the worst and basest of the whole family of man.

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WILSON OF CINCINNATI, (Ore.), Oct. 9, 1854.
MY VERY DEAR FRIEND.—Before I left Dubuque, yourself and several other gentlemen of various Christian churches, requested the publication of my sermon delivered on the 4th inst. A long habit of speaking of temperance has made me careless of the preservation of either sermon or of speech, which I am called upon to make from time to time. Therefore, to give you my language or to transfer to paper my allusions to civil and religious liberty, would be impossible. But with every possible desire to be brief, I shall give you my opinion to yourself in regard to the right of every man worshiping God according to the dictates of his own conscience, and just as freely express my fears of, and opposition to, every organization, either secret or open, which looks to the abridgement of this great principle, which is essential to the very existence of republican government, and the uncorrupted worship of the living God.

You, sir, are a Catholic; I am a Methodist. Our faith I believe to be the result of a deliberate judgment, formed after a careful investigation. Your convictions and deductions are conscientious. Just such are my faith and my devotion, and the faith and devotion of every true Christian everywhere. I suppose you could not forsake your religion and remain an honest man; I am equally clear that I could not abandon my principles and retain for a moment my self-respect, and enjoy the approving smile of my Holy Mother, and the kindly regards of the infirmities of his creatures, and scrupulously abhor pretence or deceit. Then, my dear friend, what are we to do? On the details of our respective religious creeds we can never agree. Shall you, therefore, destroy me? or shall I, with a superior charity and enlightened faith, seek your annihilation, because we differ concerning matters which none but the wise and eternal God can correctly determine? Is it an injury to either of us, the other, standing upon his responsibility to the Supreme Judge of the universe, chooses to consult him alone, and disregards the opinions of men, merely relating to things not of this world? It would insult your good sense to tamely answer these inquiries in the negative, for you had anticipated them all. There has been only one answer conclusive to every reasonable worshiper of God. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." This is the only way in which we can provide for the political agreement of multifarious religious sentiment, has guaranteed to every man a right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience. And, for the first time in the history of modern civilization, our national government has not only permitted, but has encouraged, by her liberal legislation, the growth of every sincerely devoted body of Christians, irrespective of the name or formulae it is with regret that I see an attempt made in various portions of the country to create midnight censorship and star chambers, for the avowed object of disfranchising the Catholic population of the country, and waging a warfare of all others the most fearfully vindictive—a warfare against religion. In the whole history of the world there never has been a time when such secret organizations as the Know Nothings were left with so shallow a pretence for their combination as at the present; never a time when so little has been threatened by an organized form of Christianity as now.

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You, sir, are a Catholic; I am a Methodist. Our faith I believe to be the result of a deliberate judgment, formed after a careful investigation. Your convictions and deductions are conscientious. Just such are my faith and my devotion, and the faith and devotion of every true Christian everywhere. I suppose you could not forsake your religion and remain an honest man; I am equally clear that I could not abandon my principles and retain for a moment my self-respect, and enjoy the approving smile of my Holy Mother, and the kindly regards of the infirmities of his creatures, and scrupulously abhor pretence or deceit. Then, my dear friend, what are we to do? On the details of our respective religious creeds we can never agree. Shall you, therefore, destroy me? or shall I, with a superior charity and enlightened faith, seek your annihilation, because we differ concerning matters which none but the wise and eternal God can correctly determine? Is it an injury to either of us, the other, standing upon his responsibility to the Supreme Judge of the universe, chooses to consult him alone, and disregards the opinions of men, merely relating to things not of this world? It would insult your good sense to tamely answer these inquiries in the negative, for you had anticipated them all. There has been only one answer conclusive to every reasonable worshiper of God. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." This is the only way in which we can provide for the political agreement of multifarious religious sentiment, has guaranteed to every man a right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience. And, for the first time in the history of modern civilization, our national government has not only permitted, but has encouraged, by her liberal legislation, the growth of every sincerely devoted body of Christians, irrespective of the name or formulae it is with regret that I see an attempt made in various portions of the country to create midnight censorship and star chambers, for the avowed object of disfranchising the Catholic population of the country, and waging a warfare of all others the most fearfully vindictive—a warfare against religion. In the whole history of the world there never has been a time when such secret organizations as the Know Nothings were left with so shallow a pretence for their combination as at the present; never a time when so little has been threatened by an organized form of Christianity as now.

In the first place, there is not a majority in the United States in communion with any church. There is a very clear majority who are not members of any religious body, and this majority would resist to the death the least suggestion of an encroachment upon their right of opinion. In the second place, the government does not, directly or indirectly, support by gifts or fees, any one denomination of Christians, and of course can have no preference in her choice among them. Moreover, the numerical strength of the communicants of the several denominations is very nearly the same, and kept in awe by mutual watchfulness. A mutual forbearance, continued since the organization of our government, has created a civil fraternity of feelings among conflicting opinions unknown before in the history of Christianity.

The population of the United States was in 1850, 23,191,918, and is now about 26,000,000. Of this number about 1,600,000 are Methodists of every order, 1,200,000 are Catholics.

Who, then, that is not afflicted with a superstitious monomania, can offer a reasonable pretence for a forbidden organization of religious power in the United States? In deed, sir, if there ever has been a time when infidelity and contempt for all religion had an ascendancy, that time is now.

But, should a time ever come when religious intolerance threatens the existence of free institutions, and resistance to ecclesiastical power becomes necessary, even then Know Nothingism, or any other secret political organization, ought not to receive the countenance of any lover of free government. Secrecy and hypocrisy are the favorite instruments of kings and despots.

No country can long remain free after its great principles are abandoned, and the government itself becomes the spoils of the trickery, evoking politician. I conceive the Know Nothing organization is of this character, or why the organization at all in a country like ours, where every man has a voice in the legislation of the land! Where no privileged order is established or countenance by law, where every man is free to think and say what he pleases, and where every other man in the country. If their designs are just and patriotic, they are surely sustained by reason; and I think the same reason which has convinced them will also convince us of the same things, and there can be no necessity for secrecy in the prosecution of honorable purposes.

But there are evils resulting from such associations which ought not to be overlooked. In a republican government the basis of all power must be the confidence of the people. What ever strikes public confidence, strikes at republicanism. When the Whig party bends the Democratic party upon an issue made public, the defeated party gives up the contest as honorably settled. In turn he openly gains for his own party an equal triumph, and the opposition is quietly acquiescent in their overthrow. It was done openly; they saw how it was done, and were satisfied.

But in the process of secret political societies public confidence is undermined; it gives way; a reign of terror commences; another secret organization of Know Nothings are organized; and they, too, may triumph, and the dismayed Know Nothings may not so tamely submit. They, in revenge, apply the munitions of secret warfare. Long before the charter was granted to any of these organizations, midnight was deemed a suspicious time for secret confessions, and a similar mode of proceeding was the park of fire, or the simpler modern invention called lacer matches, would be needed to assist in secret resistance to the superior trick of the victorious party.

No less sacred a citadel than the temple of worship and family altar will be lighted up, and illumine the earth with their fires. Aye, sir, already has this infernal work begun on the part of the Know Nothings, and the Catholic churches have been burned to the ground or battered down by the hands of the lawless, irresponsible mob, patronized by those graceless demagogues, who would reform the world and maintain the super-excellent character of Christian gentlemen, whilst they use for most enormous crimes, missions heated by mad fanaticism, the worst and basest of the whole family of man.

Know Nothingism Letter from a Methodist Clergyman.

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